

Report to Council



Date: June 19, 2023
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: RCMP 2023 Quarter 1 (Q1) Report
Department: RCMP Officer in Charge

Recommendation:

THAT Council receive the RCMP 2023 Q1 report from the Officer in Charge, Kelowna RCMP Detachment, dated June 19, 2023.

Purpose:

To present Council with an update based on 2023, Q1 public safety and crime data.

Background:

The RCMP acknowledges receipt of Council’s updated priorities in Q1 of 2023 and have reviewed them for alignment with Kelowna RCMP’s 2021-2024 Strategic Plan. Given that Crime & Safety is a high Council priority, coupled with emerging police enforcement initiatives since the release of the RCMP’s Strategic Plan in 2021, we have initiated a Plan refresh. This refresh will include a number of key stakeholder engagements across the city to ensure a holistic understanding of the current community safety environment before formalizing objectives.

With a view to ensuring Council remains well-informed of the current and emergent policing environment, this Report provides a general overview and analysis of crime data in Kelowna between January 1, 2023, and March 31, 2023. Generally, data indicates a modest reduction in reported crime in the first quarter of 2023, compared to the same period in 2022. Specific details are offered below that define persons, property and violent crime that continue to impact our community.

Noteworthy, Statistics Canada is expected to release the 2022 Crime Severity Index (CSI) Report this summer. While RCMP are seeing improvement in key metrics (i.e., break & enter and auto theft) since fall 2022, the annual figures mirrored those of 2021. Therefore, no significant changes are anticipated in this summer’s CSI Report from last year.

Repeat (property) offenders continue to significantly impact crime in our community and, therefore, the crime / CSI rates for Kelowna and area. Following the fall 2022 release of the BC Government’s [“Rapid Investigation into Repeat Offending and Random Stranger Violence in British Columbia”](#), Kelowna RCMP immediately began to advance some of the recommendations locally. Among these, Kelowna RCMP is actively participating in the provincially-established Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative (ReVOII). Notably, Kelowna’s Criminal Intelligence Analysts developed a data-driven “prioritization tool” which is being

adopted by all ReVOlIs provincially. While ReVOlI will benefit Kelowna, it does not effectively respond to the larger population of repeat offenders that do not exhibit violent behaviour. In response, Kelowna RCMP have initiated a Repeat Offender Management Program to be operated alongside local criminal justice partners.

Staffing continues to be a challenge in the policing sector, and this remains a key priority for Kelowna RCMP. Through a concerted effort over the last year, Kelowna's "roadable rate" has improved notably resulting in more officers in our community today than last summer. At the same time, however, key police resourcing metrics indicate that Kelowna RCMP is dealing with relatively higher Calls for Service, Criminal Code of Canada Offences and Case Loads compared to similar-size communities across the province. The Detachment remains committed to public safety as our primary focus and is continuously looking for opportunities to be operationally efficient and more effective with our proactive work. With the assistance of data-led analysis, hot spot patrols and Repeat Offender Management programming are key approaches adopted in the last year that are having a positive impact; some which is evidenced in the Q1 trends highlighted within this report.

Trends & Themes

Provided are general crime data trends and themes observed within Kelowna followed by a detailed breakdown of Q1 2023 metrics.

Break & Enter (Business).

There were 127 Break & Enter (Business) in Q1 2023 compared to 189 reported incidents in Q1 2022; a 32.8 per cent decrease. Noteworthy, that rate of Break & Enter (Business) is also down regionally and provincially, though Kelowna experienced a significantly greater reduction:

Kelowna	32.8% ↓
Central Okanagan	21.5% ↓
BC	13.9% ↓

Upon review of 2021 Break & Enters (Business), there were over 1,400 files City-wide (accounting for ~20 per cent of Kelowna CSI). Kelowna RCMP acknowledges the impacts of crime on our businesses and residences. Using data-led enforcement initiatives, we are persistently and proactively engaged.

Shoplifting

While shoplifting has increased approximately 10 per cent provincially, Kelowna experienced a 20.2 per cent increase in Q1 2023 compared to Q1 2022. Observed labour shortages among loss prevention employees coupled with a general rise in shoplifting post-pandemic may be driving some of this increase. Loss prevention policies and reporting practices may also be impacting the data with some businesses absorbing and not reporting shoplifting. In light of this, Kelowna RCMP is prioritizing and targeting repeat offenders for their persistent and brazen criminal activity in our retail businesses. Of note, RCMP's anti-shoplifting program will continue, which entails police officers conducting surveillance to identify and arrest shoplifters. This program will target known hotspots throughout 2023 to lessen the impact on affected businesses.

Robbery and Auto Theft

Q1 2023 saw a 60 per cent decrease in robbery and 39.7 per cent decrease in auto theft compared to Q1 2022. With the recent implementation of the Kelowna RCMP Repeat Offender Management Program, a corresponding reduction in these crimes suggests that continued targeting of identified repeat offenders will see additional reductions for 2023.

Intimate Partner Violence

Compared to Q1 2022, there was an 18.4 per cent increase in Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) occurrences in Kelowna. In 2021, Statistics Canada noted seven consecutive years wherein IPV incidents had increased. An identified trend shows a correlation between general economic conditions and IPV reported incidents.

Kelowna RCMP will continue to work with the Central Okanagan Elizabeth Fry Society (EFRY) and are awaiting administrative processes to be finalized for an embedded EFRY community-based victim services employee. Their expertise should help us navigate these challenging and complex cases. Given the unique and difficult investigative components of this type of crime, we have trained a number of officers as specialized investigators to work these cases in Kelowna.

Traffic

There were 688 violation tickets issued in Q1 2023 compared to 316 in Q1 2022, representing a 117 per cent increase. This notable increase was due to our concerted staffing efforts and the ability to reconstitute the Traffic Section in fall 2022. Key objectives for the Traffic Section in 2023 include:

- Reducing serious injury/fatal motor vehicle collisions;
- Concentrating on speed, distracted driving, impaired driving and intersection enforcement;
- Traffic enforcement locations selected on prior intelligence/knowledge of our community, as well as incoming complaints from the public;
- Distracted driving enforcement as it is one of the leading factors in serious collisions; and
- Red light camera advocacy with the Province of BC.

Q1 2023 Metricsⁱ

The following includes standardized indicators from the Canadian Police Performance Metrics Framework and measures of the 2021-24 Strategic Plan. All indicators relate to the City of Kelowna:

Police Capacity & Response	2022 Q1	2023 Q1	% Change
Total Calls for Service	14,001	13,113	-6.3%
Total Calls for Service from Downtown area	1,965	1,906	-3.0%
Total Calls for Service from Rutland area ⁱⁱ	Not available	1,255	Not available
Calls for Service, Priority 1 & 2 ⁱⁱⁱ	5,010	4,611	-8.0%
Response Time for Priority 1 Calls (in minutes)	8.1	8.4	3.7%
Response Time for Priority 2 Calls (in minutes)	10.3	10.2	-1.0%
% of Calls for Service receiving Callback ^{iv}	Not avail	82.5%	Not available
Officer Hours assigned to public spaces: Downtown, Rutland & parks	Not avail	3,816	Not available
Caseload ^v	100.8	100.3	0.0%
Total Property Offences	2,560	2,302	-10.1%
Auto Theft	136	82	-39.7%
Theft from Motor Vehicle	423	393	-7.1%
Break & Enter – Business	189	127	-32.8%
Shoplifting	441	530	20.2%
Break & Enter – Residential	46	49	6.5%
Bike Theft	65	62	-4.6%
Fraud	287	293	2.1%
Mischief	500	367	-26.6%
Arson	33	27	-18.2%
% of Thefts which reported Forced Entry ^{vi}	Not avail	58.65%	Not available
Persons recommended for Charges ^{vii}	Not avail	63	Not available

Total Persons Offences	770	792	2.9%
Assault (Common)	280	293	4.6%
Intimate Partner Violence	163	193	18.4%
Sex Offences ^{viii}	43	46	7.0%
Theft with Violence (includes Robbery)	20	8	-60.0%
Assault Cause Bodily Harm/ Assault with Weapon	97	97	0.0%
Illegal Drugs			
Illegal Drug Trafficking	12	19	58.3%
Traffic Safety			
Traffic Violation Tickets	316	688	117.7%
Collisions – Combined	262	277	5.7%
Relevant Social Indicators (reflecting policing complexity in Kelowna)			
Calls for Service with Mental Health Component	703	801	13.9%
Calls for service, MHA Apprehensions	145	130	-10.3%
Calls for service, Overdose ^{ix}	39	34	-12.8%

Conclusion:

The metrics and related data provided within this report are continuously monitored and used by the RCMP to inform, through evidence-based analysis, our decisions and responses to crime and public safety in Kelowna; including that of advocacy for system changes at the Provincial and National policy levels. The Kelowna RCMP Officer in Charge (OIC) continues to drive transformative change with a focus on sustainable workloads, appropriate staffing levels, and wellness of all members of Kelowna Detachment. By taking care of our people, and increasingly using intelligence and data-led, targeted enforcement to deploy finite resources, the Kelowna RCMP is positioned to “show up at our best for every citizen,” reduce crime and improve public sense of safety in our community.

Internal Circulation:

Community Safety Department
Communications Department

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Submitted by: K. Triance, Superintendent, Kelowna RCMP Detachment

Approved for inclusion:



S. Leatherdale, Divisional Director, Corporate & Protective Services

cc: D. Caul, Community Safety Director
T. White, Police Services Branch Manager
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ⁱ The following annual metrics are used to monitor delivery of our 2022-2024 Strategic Plan:

- Objective 1, Increase the sense of safety in our public spaces: Citizen perceived level of safety in areas including Downtown & Rutland per City of Kelowna bi-annual Public Safety & Crime Survey
- Objective 2, Decrease the risk of property crime: Percent of property offence charges that resulted in a conviction
- Objective 3, Earn the trust of more citizens that have experienced persons crimes: Detachment participation in trauma-informed practice training, Detachment referrals to community supports
- Objective 4, Show up at our best for every citizen: Seats at senior decision-making table held underrepresented groups; Detachment participation in unconscious bias training & Indigenous Cultural Safety; Detachment participation in mental wellness training and crisis debrief supports; Citizen satisfaction with police services as per City of Kelowna Citizen Survey

ⁱⁱ The Rutland atom was created and applied beginning in April 2022. This number does not reflect the entire year for 2022.

ⁱⁱⁱ Priority 1 calls are the most serious emergency calls and require immediate police response. They involve a risk of loss of life or grievous bodily harm. Examples include in-progress abductions, assaults, domestic disputes, home invasions, robberies, sexual assaults, screams for help, shootings, stabbings, and suicidal persons. Priority 2 calls are urgent calls that require immediate police attention such as a residential break and enter in progress.

^{iv} False alarms, abandoned calls for service, traffic and online reports, assistance outside of public safety and failure to appear are not indicated for follow up calls. New metric, changes to system was required to capture the data. Changes implemented in March 2022.

^v Case loads are defined as the number of Criminal Code offences (excluding drugs and traffic offences) per authorized strength. They represent the workload per officer, and as a result, are often a better indicator of the demand for police services than either a jurisdiction's population or its crime rate. The case load is calculated by dividing the total number of Criminal Code offences by the authorized strength for the reporting period. The case load was calculated using the year previous to the end date of the quarter being reported on (i.e. 2021-07-01 through 2022-06-30). *For reference, in 2020, annual caseload for Coquitlam was 40 (pop 152,800) and for Township of Langley (pop 133,951) was 54.*

^{vi} Excludes shoplifting as forced entry is not relevant. New metric, changes to system was required to capture the data. Changes implemented in March 2022.

^{vii} Consistent with national reporting, the "persons charged" category will include the number of people recommended for property crime offence charges by police (not the number of charges laid or recommended).

^{viii} Sexual offences include sexual assault level 3 (aggravated), sexual assault level 2 (weapon or causing bodily harm), sexual assault level 1 (common sexual assault), and sexual violations against children.

^{ix} Overdose counts do not reflect all overdose incidents occurring within police service boundaries as response is frequently by paramedics. Where police do not attend, the occurrence will not appear in police records.